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ABSTRACT

Examination of lyrics of the blues and jazz forms of black music indicates their importance as communication. Contemporary styles can be divided into five overlapping categories: (1) "mainstream," the post-"bebop" style and soul jazz; (2) jazz influenced by other ethnic music; (3) the avant-garde jazz, which is often nationalistic and of social importance; (4) "thirdstream," a combination of jazz with European classical concert styles; and (5) the new, diversified liturgical music. Aside from lyrics, there are musical signals that are of communicational importance to blacks because of special uses of rhythm, melody, inflection, scale patterns, harmony, and improvisation. Black music has been largely influenced by two durable styles that possess tested communicative powers. One is the antiphonal (call and response) song, issuing directly from African traditions. The other is the blues, the foundation of much popular black music and an embodiment of those elements which characterize black culture and the life style of blacks. (Included in this document are outlines for four courses on black music and an extensive reading list.) (RN)

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THE RHETORICAL DIMENSIONS OF BLACK MUSIC PAST AND PRESENT

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The most expressive Negro music of any given period will be an exact reflection of what the Negro himself is. It will be a portrait of the Negro in America at that particular time. Who he thinks he is, what he thinks America or the world to be, given the circumstances, prejudices and delights of that particular America. Le Roi Jones, The Blues People

THE RHETORICAL DIMENSIONS OF BLACK MUSIC

PAST AND PRESENT

"The basic optimism of the American people reveals itself in the most ordinary and commonplace aspects of our daily lives. We are so convinced that this is the best of all possible worlds and getting better all the time, that "Onward and Upward" might be our unofficial national motto. This cheery view of life is plainly illustrated in the titles of some of the standard popular songs. Thus we have "Look for the Silver Lining", "I'm Sitting on Top of the World", "The Sunny Side of the Street", "I Know Where I'm Going", and, most explicit of all, "You've Got to Accentuate the Positive, Eliminate the Negative". These titles are a small but significant clue to the student of the American National Character. Guided Composition, A Workshop of Writing Exercises, Charles Kaplan

"The lyrics of many popular songs represent a realistic treatment of the gut issues of the day. The words of songs like ---------- and ---------- express the determination of Black people to achieve equal rights in a just American society. The struggle to overcome the frustration and poverty of ghetto life is illustrated in such songs as ------- ---------- and ----------. There are songs like ---------- and ----------that deal with the search for dignity and respect in the love relationship between a man and a woman. And finally, the basic need of everyone to develop and express his individuality is depicted in the words of ----------and----------.

Far from being mere frivolous rhymes about the moon in June, many popular songs represent a serious attempt to portray the real problems of human existance."

FROM PARAGRAPH TO THEME

UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICE

Herman Hudson

and

Maurice Imhoff

Indiana University

These diametrically opposed viewpoints as offered in two leading English compositon workbooks (one aimed at classes made up, primarily, of white students, the other at black students) serve to show how different are the worlds of black music and western music.

Ample evidence exists to support the contention that black music in Africa and America has traditionally been used as a means of communication. Let us now examine this phenomenon as it manifests itself in the twentieth century.

How does black music speak to people? Does it convey the same type of message to all people? Are there elements in the music that are addressed exclusively to blacks? Do these elements remain constant or are they extricably linked to quotidian vicissitudes? Are messages communicated only through lyrics or are there other strictly musical levels on which this phenomenon is also operative? These are just a few of the questions to which to the rest of this paper will address itself.

The most readily apparent level on which communication takes place in music is verbal, that is, when lyrics are present. At one time or another virtually all aspects of life have served as subject matter for poets and song writers. Those things which provide subject matter, attitudes, political-socio-economic views, psychological states, and other themes become dominant, recede, stabilize, disappear and reappear, change and are transmogrified as a result of such externals as Zeitgeist, shift of cultural foci, challenges on a personal level, etc.

Just as the words of the spirituals convey different meanings at different times under different conditions and to different people so do the lyrics of contemporary song types.

The blues is a case in point. A few generalizations about the blues in vocal form follow:

1. The blues is basically a call and response from (African retention).

2. The typical blues text has a stanza of three lines arranged -

A	A^1	B
Statement	Statement repeated	Resolution of first two statements

(The statements are usually, although not always, rhymed.)

In keeping with the personalization endemic to blues and jazz the second statement A^1 is rarely an exact repeat but rather is altered by the addition of some sort of exclamation in whatever slang is currently popular - such as "yeah", "ha mercy", "go head on", "I wants to holler", or "hep us out", etc.

3. Vocal blues are rarely narrative and each stanza is a complete (or relatively complete)story. Often verses are linked together that have no relationship to each other.

4. The text is often built around "in-language" of blacks.

   a. hip and current dialect and jargon.

   b. use of double entendre.

5. Texts are usually topical and lack self-consciousness. However there are numerous examples of blues themes which are universal in import and consequently belong to all eras.

6. Extremes - from extremely personal in that the performer sings about himself and his involvements, to a combination of stock phrases and topical clichés combined from blues to blues. Even when the performer works out of the latter bag, his sense of style will give it the personal touch. (Since the lyrics are non-narrative and lines have little relevance beyond the single verse often the blues singer will grab the first line that rhymes.)

i.e. verse	I took my girl to the circus to see what she could see (2X)
last line	When she caught me lookin' she took a poke at me

or

last line — When the monkey waved his tail at her
she said he looked like me

or

last line — She found herself another dude and
said she'd set me free

or

last line — When she spotted a heavy stud
She handed him her key

or

last line — When she saw what the elephant had
she wouldn't come home with me.

etc.

As must now be obvious, any of the above last lines, as well as, thousands of others will resolve the situation set forth in the first two lines.

Because the next verse is not dependent on what has transpired in this verse, the resolution doesn't help or hinder the flow or sense of the blues. In other words the resolution just doesn't make any difference. All blues singers have a common repository of stock phrases, resolutions, etc., chosen primarily because of their rhyming possibilities.

7. Usually solo performance to maximize freedom aspects.

8. While the blues performer is likely to choose virtually any subject as a topic, the subject matter most often involves relationships between men and women or man and a hostile environment.

The blues is an introspective harshly realistic music. The sturdy realism of the uprooted black folk is the spirit of the blues. The blues has intensity and directness as compared with the language of American popular song which has lost much

of its freshness and its ability to convey strong emotion.

Writing about blues verse, Paul Oliver says:

> To appreciate the music without appreciating the content is to do an injustice to the blues singers and to fail to comprehend the full value of their work. (Oliver 1960:32)

Blues text is a very important part of the music. Bluesmen seldom sing about events that do not involve them personally and individual expression is the sine qua non of blues.

> Blues is above all the expression of the individual Negro....(Omitted due to copyright restrictions, from Blues Fell This Morning: The Meaning of the Blues by Paul Oliver, copyright 1960, Horizon Press, New York, p. 326.)

Some examples of blues which belong to no particular era follow:

Why I Sing the Blues (B.B. King and Dave Clark) Words omitted due to copyright restrictions.

Hooting Owl Blues (Dolly Ross, Vocalist)

Examples of Topical Blues:

Backlash Blues (Langston Hughes)

Champ Joe Louis (King of the Gloves) Leroy Buddy-Vocal (1938)

Win the War Blues (Sonny Boy Williamson-Vocal 1944)

Trainin' Camp Blues (Roosevelt Sykes-Vocal 1941)

FDR Blues (Champion Jack Dupress-Vocal 1946)

Death of Leroy Carr (Bumble Bee Slim-Vocal 1935)

Other compositions in the blues idiom but not strictly blues, have also had themes that reflect contemporary attitudes and concerns:

Respect (Otis Redding)
Saturday Nigh Fishery (Louis Jordan)
Mississippi Goddam (Nina Simone)
Why? (The King of Love Is Dead) Bobby Taylor
Black is Beautiful (Charles Wood and Jon Cacauas)

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The above, as well as such tunes as "Compared to What", The Ballad of Emmett Till", "Strange Fruit", "Why Am I so Black and Blue", and "Goin' to Chicago", attest to the wide variety of subjects treated in black popular songs (Blues and Rhythm and Blues).

While the subject matter, of a necessity, is not as varied, gospel music and other black religious music evidences many of the same characteristics vis-a-vis communication.

Shirley Ceasar

Tell the President too,
  tell the Governor,
The Internal Revenue
Choose ye this day,
  whom ye shall serve

or

The Staples Singers, "Why" a protest number cut with Epic Records.

One must be constantly aware of the fact that many lyrics and/or titles of a controversial or otherwise objectionable nature never reached beyond a live, local audience. Such externals as political, social and economic pressures greatly influenced what was recorded and subsequently aired for a broader audience. (Including Randy's Record Shop listeners). The use of double entendre and "ingroup" language very often permitted the artist to circumlocute this kind of

censorship, and project his message to an attuned audience. The flexibility, latitude and great sublety of black language make this possible.

In music which does not utilize a text, the message has to be communicated via some other means. Often meaning is suggested through the titles chosen by a composer. Using jazz as a microcosm of black music in toto, let us then look at the way song titles, as reflective of attitudes have changed between 1900 - 1972.

In jazz, the choice of song titles have often been an accurate index of prevailing attitudes. In early jazz (circa 1900 - 1925) song titles, nicknames even the choice of names for the groups are indicative of the post-minstrel-entertainment-quasi-clown cum servile jester posture, which was then au courante. It was a time when black codes were the law of the land, lynching was commonplace, the role of the black artist was rigidly defined by a racist society and any hopes or dreams of equality ever becoming reality were abruptly shattered.

The musician who would survive was forced to accept, at least superficially, this role of the mendicant, grinning, apologetic minstrel. Some of the nicknames which most reflect this attitude are:

"Bunk" Johnson
"Big Eye" Nelson
"Sachel Mouth" (Satchmo) Armstrong
"Stale Bread" Lacoume
"Jelly Roll" Morton
"Leadbelly" Ledbetter
"Lightnin'" Hopkins, et al

Some of names of groups were:

Cookies Gingersnaps
McKinneys Cotton Pickers
Jelly James and his Fewsicians
New Orleans Feetwarmers
Sonny Clay's Plantation Orchestra

By the swing period, New York had become the center of jazz music, but every city outside of the deep South with a sizable black population had a big band. In 1937 alone, there were 18,000 musicians employed in traveling bands trying to play in the prevailing jazz style.

The constitution of jazz audiences underwent a change because of: The repeal of prohibition which opened up night club entertainment; jazz became the music of the college set and the ballroom dancers; the depression forced black musicians into the background of the recording industry; the white imitators took over and the black innovator suffered.

The above conditions are reflected in the fact that the musical compositions most often chosen by the big bands were popular tinpan alley type tunes or the blues. In the cosmopolitan atmosphere of night clubs and dance halls, located in urban centers, popular tune types, novelties and nonsense songs were the main fare. The big band compositions played by these groups bore titles that had little meaning and even less relevance to the black population. The music, as well as the titles was, with rare exceptions, aimed at mainstream White America. Innocuous tune titles such as; Shanghai Shuffle, Stardust, Song of India, Ol' Rockin' Chair, Margie, The Man with the Funny Little Horn, The Music Goes Round and Round, Lazy Bones, Sing - Sing - Sing and String of Pearls reflect the nature of the audience to which the music was aimed. By 1945 musical conditions had even worsened. Eminent writer, Le Roi Jones, very perceptively puts it this way:

Swing had no meaning for blues people, nor was it expressive

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America took the music to heart. There were swing radio

material deleted due to copyright restrictions

conditional separation from the mainstream spared him. (Jones, page 181)

On the other hand, in the Southwest bands like those of Benny Moten, Walter Paige and Count Basie were the important Blues bands. The titles of the compositions played by these bands reflect more accurately their affinity to the black community; such titles as "Eighteenth Street Blues", "Fattning Frogs", "New Tulsa Blues", "Get Low Down", "Starvation Blues", "Bootleggers Blues", "Mojo Blues", "Atlanta Low Down", etc.

Of course by 1927 Duke Ellington was already suggesting a black awareness in his tune title choices. (i.e., "Black and Tan Fantasy", "Creole Love Call", "Black Beauty", "Mood Indigo", "Harlem Flat Blues", "Harlem Airshaft", "Bojangles", "A Portrait of Bert Williams", "Liberian Suite", "My People", "La Plus Belle Africaine", "Harriet Tubman", "Frederick Douglas", Denmark Vesey", "Nat Turner").

By the early 1940's, a change in jazz direction was inevitable. This change was to prove a greater departure from the past than was Louis Armstrongs or that of the swing men.

Much of the development of the new expression - bebop, as it came to be known - took place in New York City, by then the center of the music business. Members of the various big bands, when in New York, congregated at various clubs in Harlem at places like Minton's and Monroe's Uptown House to jam after hours. The experimentation and much of the initial work of the new style was done at these sessions.

> Bebop is a music of revolt: revolt against big bands, arrangers, vertical harmonies, soggy rhythms, non-playing orchestral leaders, tin-pan alley, against commercialized music in general. It reasserts the individuality of the jazz musician as a creative artist playing spontaneous and melodic music within the framework of jazz, but with new tools, sounds, and concepts. (Russell, Page 187)

The bebop period was the first era in jazz in which the performer conceived of himself in terms other then "entertainer". He assumed the posture of an artist with the dignity and status afforded artists in Western European art music.

During this period song titles reflected newly emerging attitudes in yet another way consistent with the budding cultural nationalism of the music. Since the beginning of recordings black performers (particularly during the swing period), had drawn very heavily on pop tunes of the day as source materials. Of course, benefits from recording royalties accrued to the composers of the compositions, most of whom were white.

Black musicians who had time and time again watched products of their creative efforts appropriated by white imitators and parlayed into fortunes now found a way to turn the tables.

Black performer/composers took existing pop tune structures and, through extension, substitution, alteration of the existing structure and the imposition of their own melodies, created exciting new compositions. The result - a <u>familiar</u> chord progression but

a new composition whose title carried meanings comprehensible to the members of the ingroup.

A number of purposes were served by this phenomenon of tune transformation.

1. The members of the ingroup (mostly black) recognized the old tunes in their new trappings and were able to benefit from the use of familiar chord progressions.

2. The young white uninitiate was often baffled by the crytic, and purposely enigmatic titles that now identified the old tunes.

3. The white pop music composer (if he recognized his chord progression at all) could not collect recording royalties because chord progressions were not covered by copyright law. The black musician therefore received the recording royalties.

4. Most musicians were made aware of the infinite superiority of the jazz compositions written to go with the existing chord structures.

5. A new whole genre of compositions emerged reflecting the genius of black musicians and providing another example of hidden meanings or coded signals.

Some examples follow:

BEBOP TUNE	STANDARD ON WHICH BASED
Anthropolgy	I Got Rhythm
Bird Gets the Worm	Lover Come Back to Me
Bird Love	How High the Moon
Charge Account	All the Things You Are
Cheers	I Got Rhythm
Confirmation	I Got Rhythm and I May Be Wrong
Donna Lee	Indiana

Evidence	Just You, Just Me
52nd Street Theme	I Got Rhythm
Groovin' High	Whispering

The titles now became cryptic, sometimes personalized (the composers' name in the title), and almost always ingroup directed. i.e., "Aleucha", "Bird Gets the Worm", "Little Willie Leaps", "Half Nelson", "El Sino", "Now's the Time", "Dizzy Atmosphere", "Blue Monk", "Farmers Market", etc.

When the cool school, a term used to describe the first alteration of bebop, with its emphasis on the instrospective, cool sound, abstract music, understatement, the written arrangement, etc., came to the fore in the mid-fifties, again these attitudes were reflected in the music and the song titles. This was a music of disinvolvement and was played predominantly by white, west coast musicians and featured complex harmonies often at the risk of rhythmic efficacy. Some exemplary titles that reflect the don't-draw attention way of life are "Bockhanal", "Morpo", "Popo", "Venus de Milo", etc. (coming out of Greek Mythology) "Cool", and "Happy Little Sunbeam".

With the advent of contemporary music and its multiplicity of styles, directions, etc., the phenomenon again presents itself. For purposes of this paper I have divided the contemporary schools into five broad overlapping categories. In each of these categories the tune titles reflect the attitudes-musical, ideological, social, etc., of the music.

1. Mainstream (includes primarily post-bebop and soul jazz).

a. The post beboppers have brought to fruition the innovations and techniques pioneered in the late 1940's by Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and their confreres. The titles operate

out of the same bag as bebop titles. (i.e., "Nica's Dream", "Birk's Works", "Oleo", "Seven Steps to Heaven", "Miles Smiles", etc.

b. Soul jazz (funky, blues, down home, etc.) derives from the rhythmic music of the rural black church. It usually has simple repetitive harmonies, strong infectious rhythms, is black people oriented, very close to Rhythm and Blues, and draws heavily on such stylized forms as "The Twist", "Boogaloo", "Funky Chicken", etc., and titles such as: "Sack O'Woe", "Sister Sadie", "Filthy McNasty", "Sister Salvation", "Kentucky Oysters", "Opus de Funk", "Dis Heah" and "Dat Deah", "Hog Callin' Blues", etc. Such titles as these are particularly significant in that they graphically describe phenomena inextricably linked to black life styles.

2. Jazz influenced by other ethnic musics with such titles as "Señor Blues", "Solea", "Coracavado", "Cubano Be, Cubano Bop", "One Note Samba", "Raga II", "Grazing in the Grass, High Life", etc.

3. The next category which many people deem the most important of all is the avant-garde "The Jazz Music of the Future". This music is multifaceted and springs from vastly disparate experiences. All of the important players in this music are black and most align themselves implicitly or explicitly with the movement toward black consciousness. Many black jazz men in their fierce protectiveness of the music refuse even to call the music jazz, preferring to label it simply black music.

Much of the music is self-consciously nationalistic and laden with social import. Much of it strives to divest itself of those things which can be construed as Western or European. The call is for a return to Africa both philosophically and musically. Freedom with all its implications and ramifications becomes the

battle cry.

Perhaps the philosophy of the avant-garde is best captured in this statement from Archie Shepp in late 1964:

> This is where the avant-garde begins. It is not a movement but a state of mind. It is a thorough denial of technological precision and a reaffirmation of das volk and let us be clear that Ornette Coleman has never been any further out than Lightnin' Hopkins, a country bluesman or even a shepherd. All three play out of the same human experience: The love of children, the love of life, their persistence of denial------.

Archie Shepp. A View from the Inside (Chicago: Maher Publications, 1966)p. 39

These concerns again reflect themselves in the title of compositions as well as in the music. Freedom, Africa, social concerns, cultural nationalism, etc., serve as suitable song subjects. Some examples are: "Garvey's Ghost", "Ché", "Three for Malcolm X", "Black America", "Airegin" (Nigeria), "Mawandishi", "Uhuru", "Dakár", "African Violets", "Message from Kenya", "Uhuru Africa", "Afro-American Sketches", "Emancipation Blues", "The Price you Gotta Pay to be Free", " A Loud Minority", "Freedom Jazz Dance", "Nefertiti", "The Freedom Suite", "Song for Ché", "War Orphans", "Song of the United Front", "Song of Songmy", "Fables of Faubus", etc.

4. The thirdstream (a term coined by Gunther Schuller) is ostensibly a marriage between European concert music and jazz. It is usually a music much closer to Western Art forms than any other type of jazz. (The music is also philosophically much closer to Europe then to Africa). The success or failure of this body of music is usually predicated on its realization of norms of excellence vis-a-vis Western musical concepts. The music is

usually academic carrying with it the concommitant dangers. "The fusion of jazz and art is doomed as soon as it becomes self-conscious." (Meller - page 363)

In this area of contemporary jazz an uneasy symbiosis exists or as Le Roi Jones so perceptively observes:

There is no doubt in my mind that the techniques of European

Jones, The Blues People p. 229-230

It goes without saying that the ability of the music in this category to communicate to black people at large, is at best minimal.

The titles reflect European musical concerns and social posture. (i.e., "Abstractions", "The Golden Striker", "The Creation of the World", "No Sun in Venice", "City of Glass", "On Green Mountain", Transformation", and a great number of compositions using titles descriptive of European forms, such as, Sonata for----------, Symphony for----------, Variations on a Theme by----------, Fugue for----------, Opus----------, etc.).

The final area of contemporary jazz concerns itself with a relatively new phenomenon which to many people seems a contradiction in terms: liturgical jazz.

Liturgical music of the last decade is more diversified than

ever. This music has thrown off many of its shackles in an effort to render itself acceptable to the masses. Up to 10 or 20 years ago the church was willing to build structures like Frank Lloyd Wright edifices, have its members dress in all the latest Paris styles, use all the latest technological advancements for comfort and appearance but was reluctant to accept music not written in the distant past.

In recent years however, there has been a growing discontent with this state of affairs. There has been a heightening awareness of the need to communicate using the musical language of today. Just as there have been attempts to update the liturgical language, so exists a parallel in music.

Some of the characteristics of this new genre are: A jazz music for use in the church or with church related activities, the use of religious or spiritual text, a merging of harmonic, melodic and rhythmic elements of jazz with liturgical forms of Western art music (i.e., Mass, Oratorio, Cantata, etc.)

As with all other areas of music which relate to jazz, black musicians have been in the vanguard. Perhaps the fact that both jazz and black religious music share the same illustrious ancestors has provided a precedent out of which the two could again become parts of the same musical and/or religious experience.

Many contemporary jazz compositions in the liturgical idiom reflect these concerns. (i.e., "A Love Supreme", "Ascension", by John Coltrane, Duke Ellington's "Sacred Service", "A Jazz Mass" by Mary Lou Williams, "A Mass for Peace", "The Beatitudes", "The 22nd Psalm", by David Baker, "This Shall be a Sign", "The Baby King", by Solomon Edwards.

In this kind of music an enormous diversity exists. As with so much black music and other truly creative art, form is subservient to content. The main thing is the message. The means by which it is communicated (i.e., media, forms, instrumental choices, texts) are characterized by the latitude, flexibility and possibilities for maximization of personal expression that is endemic to all black music. Consequently those things which are subsumed under the liturgical jazz umbrella include Jazz Masques (dance, vocal and/or instrumental music, acting, film, multi media, etc.), simple text settings, purely instrumental works, drama with incidental music, ad infinitum.

How does black music when divested of lyrics and title implications project its message? Are there musical signals such as particular forms, scales, note choices, instrumental and timbrel preferences, rhythmic constructions, harmonic schemata, etc., which when used in particular ways communicate a special message? It is this writer's contention that there exists a body of musical signals that do have special meaning to Black people.

Leonard Meyer in Emotion and Meaning in Music says;

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(Meyer, Page 17, 21-22)

At another time and in another place in black history, communication functioned on a different level. The holler, the spiritual, the shout, the work song, the street cry, etc., all contained coded information essential to survival. The world of the slave usually extended no further than the neighboring plantations. Seemingly innocuous utterances (as far as the slave masters were concerned) were often laden with signals decipherable only by blacks on the same and/or neighboring plantations. These meanings were often

specific,i.e., "Look out, Massa's, Coming", "There's a Meeting Tonight", "Escape Tonight", "Listen for my Holler - Old Jake's Coming", etc. (A wealth of other information concerning health, social interaction, gossip, etc., was often conveyed via these means.)

Later when conditions permitted movement across broader geographical areas and social interaction with a larger segment of the black population, specific meanings of the nature just described were often lost or simply not known outside the areas in which their currency had been established.

With the redefinition of the black community to mean the country's total black population all those things which have had specific meaning in the past (whether the message itself has been retained or not) form a nucleus of cultural signals which because the signs themselves have meaning for everyone in the group (even if they are unable to articulate a specific message) are shared and recognized and "identified with" by everyone. (i.e., the house rent party, the song "After Hours", "Signifying", playing the dozens, a soul handshake, the black power salute, Kentucky Oysters - cole slaw - cornbread and red pop, "Wade in the Water", etc.

All music consists of at least the following components; melody, harmony, rhythm, inflection and form. In determining how music communicates one must then isolate and examine each of the elements. Of all of the musical components, to Black people, rhythm traditionally has carried the most meaning. This should not be considered as a paraphrase of the time worn cliché "all Negroes have got rhythm". That kind of thinking is, of course, patently ridiculous because it presumes that there are behavior patterns that transcend acculturation.

A. M. Jones, in speaking of the importance of rhythm in

African music, says:

> Rhythm is to the African what harmony is to Europeans and it is in the complex interweaving of contrasting rhythmic patterns that he finds his greatest aesthetic satisfaction; and further, "whatever be the devices used to produce them, in African music there is practically always a clash of rhythms; this is a cardinal principle". (A. M. Jones, African Rhythm, Africa, XXIV January 1954).

It is this writer's observation that the above statement holds true for Black people throughout the world, regardless of geographic distribution.

A case in point, is the manner in which black teenagers respond to the stylized dance rhythms of the boogaloo, funky chicken, twist, etc., when performed by James Brown, Marvin Gaye, Aretha Franklin, Sam and Dave et al while remaining sophisticatedly unmoved by The Beatles, The Iron Butterfly, The Who and other white rock groups of similar persuasion.

Four measures after the beginning of even a new record by Marvin Gaye every black teenager in the room has begun a personalized yet collective reaction to the music. Instantly they have categorized the dance type (boogaloo, funky chicken, etc.) and established the linguistic, kinesic and gestural parameters which are appropriate. The responses are the result of cultural conditioning born of a lifetime exposure to primary sources. (i.e., soul stations, the record collection of parents, the street corner, the church, etc.)

To earlier generations, these same kinds of intuitive, non-specific yet somehow vaguely specific, collective cultural messages might have been transmitted by Avery Parish playing "After Hours", Bullmoose Jackson singing "I Love You, Yes I Do", Nat"King" Cole crooning "Sweet Lorraine", Illinois Jacquet playing "Flying Home", Louis Jordan yelling "Ain't Nobody Here but us Chickens", Slim Gaillard clowning through "Flat Foot Floogie", Cleanhead Vinson

singing "Kidney Stew Blues" or Jimmy Lunceford swinging through "Don't Be That Way".

This collective consciousness vis-a-vis rhythm makes it possible for black people to recognize and react in appropriate fashion, to the same rhythms when introduced in such disparate situations as the music of the Jackson Five, Ornette Coleman, Sister Roberta Martin, Isaac Hayes or Nancy Wilson.

In the area of melody, which is certainly a great deal less important in the black ethos than rhythm, certain characteristics with concommitant internalized meanings are observable.

One need only point to the manner in which the Southern Baptist Church soprano, the lead singer with the Temptations, Aretha Franklin, Ray Charles, Billy Daniels, Ella Fitzgerald or Clark Terry "worry" a note and observe the response elicited, to conclude that a message is indeed being communicated. This technique of worrying a note or in correct musical terms, exploring microtonal pitch variation, when coupled with another equally popular technique with black vocalists, that of using melisma (singing many pitches on a single syllable) provides a point of immediate identification to the black community. This technique when used by black singers and instrumentalists probably represents the vestiges of a dimly remembered past, when the holler and the cry of the street vendor carried specific and significant meaning.

It seems only yesterday that I heard my grandma moving about the kitchen, rustling the pots and pans half singing, half humming a tuneless ditty ("I hear-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-d a voice in Jes-us-us-s-s -s-s-s name-----") not unlike the sorrow songs of a not too distant time which marked the nadir of the Black man's existance in America.

Inflection is yet another of the important traditional char-

acteristics of black music. It is virtually impossible to envision a music which issues from the black experience, that does not make use of inflection. Inflection, in the speech of blacks assumes a position of great importance, because it provides one of the basic ways in which emphasis, stress and other subleties are communicated. For instance, a ghetto black will often stretch a syllable for emphasis (i.e., that was the u-u-u-u-u-u-u-u-u-gliest man I ev----------er say!!!) This (and other ways of using inflections) often manifests itself in the music of black composers and performers.

The notion of inflection as microtonal pitch variation can be viewed as an Africanism. The vocal and instrumental inflections, which are given to certain individual pitches during the course of a piece of music are numerous, whether it is jazz, a spiritual, or some other form of black music. The sliding effects and the techniques of approaching certain pitches from either above or below serve to reinforce this concept. In the course of a piece of music, many different pitches can be sounded as variants of a central pitch. This would seem to reinforce the concept of an unbroken tradition from Africa to contemporary Black America with regard to flexibility of pitch.

It may well be that much of what is perceived as peculiar to black music is really a product of a black attitude of conceiving instruments as extensions of the voice. This would certainly account for the many vocal references on the part of black composers in their music. Such things as cadence in conversation and speech imitation are invariably encountered in a discussion about the qualities peculiar to black music. In jazz, one is aware of the

frequent allusions made to the vocal quality of instruments. Generally when the music is described as "soulful" the reference is to these vocal qualities. The slides, slurs and elisions of a B. B. King, Miles Davis or Horace Silver are manifestations of black speech patterns.

In black music as in black speech, inflection, is one of a multiplicity of techniques used towards the achievement of maximum personal expressivity.

Improvisation, conspicuously absent from Western European art music, occupies a position of major importance in all African and African derived music. The ability to bring to any situation, however structured, something of one's own personality, is central to the black ethos.

The entire black life style is often defined by these myriad examples of improvisational behavior; "playing the dozens", rapping and signifying (improvising on a verbal level), "doin' your thing", (being yourself), "doin' it to death", (Performing a task at your optimum level), "whuppin' game", (outsmarting someone) etc.

In jazz, gospel music, rhythm and blues, blues, etc., one rarely hears identical performances of a piece of music. When it does occur it is usually to the discredit of whoever's doing the imitating. Through improvisation, insipid, banal pop tunes are often converted to vehicles capable of transmitting cultural signals not inherent in the original tune (i.e., Ray Charles singing, "You Are My Sunshine", Wes Montgomery playing "Goin' out of my Head", Stevie Wonder and "Ma Cherie, Amour", Aretha Franklin singing "The Star Spangled Banner", John Coltrane playing "My Favorite Things", etc.)

Because improvisation is a commonly understood, communally shared,

appreciated and highly valued phenomenon in the black community it emerges as a very important communicative device.

Certain scales have enjoyed popularity in the black community for many years. Perhaps the most important, and certainly the most used, of these is what is usually called the blues scale. This scale is one of the most readily identifiable characteristics of that which is thought to be black music. The appearance of the blues scale in Western music is directly attributable to African influences. There is simply no precedent in the history of Western music for a blues scale. The blues scale and/or the blue notes have found their way into the vocabulary of Western compositional techniques.

A. M. Jones documented the existance of the blue notes (flatted 3rd and flatted 7th) in African Music. These sounds were not a part of a scale or scale system which was peculiarly African in nature because no such scale or scale system existed in African music. But once these sounds reached the new world, they made a tremendous impact on the European concepts of scales and fixed pitches.

The diatonic scale of European harmony is the one which is used in the great majority of early black music, but this is not to infer that the slaves immediately assimilated this scale from the new culture and began using it in their music. The reason the diatonic scale is in evidence is that it was much like the arranged pitch material (not scale, because there was no peculiarly African scale) used by Africans in their music. The appearance of the blue notes, which were obviously not a part of the diatonic scale, made them stand out as elements which were not in keeping with the rest of the scale and therefore gave the music in which they were used

a distinctive African feeling. This unusual musical feeling which was created by these blue notes became the basis for the blues, and was incorporated into many other forms, like the spirituals, the shouts, and the worksongs. A check on fifty (50) blues phonograph records and eighteen (18) others sung and played by George Gibson and Earl Woodward shows the following results: (Figures from American Negro Songs and Spirituals, John W. Work)

Flatted 3rd and Flatted 7th	Flatted 3rd	Flatted 7th	Neither
14	17	29	8

The pitch materials for the blues, i.e., the blue notes, are obviously derived from African sources and have become very important in Black American music.

In the areas of Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, the blues scale 1 (2) $\flat 3$ $\natural 3$ 4 $\#4$ 5 (6) $\flat 7$ 1 comprises the major part of the entire pitch material repository.

Blues of a non jazz variety - probably 95%

Rhythm and Blues - probably 90%

Jazz varies in different eras

(1945) i.e., Bebop - 75%

(1940's) Southwest Swing Band - 80%

(Circa 1965) Soul Jazz - 100%, etc.

In addition to those compositions actually employing a formal blues structure there are countless compositions which borrow heavily on the blues scale. (i.e., "Working" by Nat Adderley, "Moanin'" by Bobby Timmons, "Hummin'" by Nat Adderley, "Sister Sadie by Horace Silver, any composition by James Brown, Marvin Gaye, Jackson Five, Donny Hathaway, etc.)

Many jazz players, as well as others, show a decided propensity

for converting pop compositions to blues types. (i.e., Oscar Peterson, Horace Silver, Wes Montgomery, Milt Jackson, Stanley Turrentine, et al). This transmogrification is usually wrought through the imposition of the blues scale, blue notes, certain characteristic inflections and phrases, and the unique use of characteristic rhythms.

Whatever the means used to effect the change, all good jazz players evince some aural evidences of their blues roots.

While perhaps not so widespread as in jazz, the blues scale turns up time and time again in gospel compositions and improvisations. In many instances, if the words were omitted from some gospel renditions even the cognoscenti would have trouble distinguishing blues from gospel (particularly a rendition by Aretha Franklin or Ray Charles with wordless vocals).

At any rate exposure to years of blues and blues inflected melodies, from the hollers, shouts and work songs of the 19th century through Bessie Smith, Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Billie Holiday, countless boogie woogie players, Charlie Parker, Nat "King" Cole to the bass lines of Marvin Gaye and James Brown, have resulted in a kind of internalization. The blues scales and blue notes are the communal legacy of black people.

Harmony, although less important in the black music heirachy than rhythm or melody, is still very distinctive. Certain progressions have been popular with every generation of black composers and performers i.e., I_7 IV_7 I_7 V_7 IV_7 I_7 (the blues), I VI II V (rhythm) etc. Without becoming too technical one need only listen to the following compositions to hear some of the most common and meaningful progressions in black music.

What I Say - Ray Charles
I Got A Woman - Ray Charles
Drown in my Own Tears - Ray Charles

He'll Understand - The Davis Sisters
A Leak in the Building - Alex Bradford
Down by the Riverside - Alex Bradford
Let's Get Down to Business - B. Billing
I Heard it Through the Grapevine - Gladys Knight and the Pips
Fever - Little Willie John
Something you Got - Chris Kenner
Surely God is Able-The Ward Singers

Certain voicings have likewise, through repeated use in diverse situations, acquired special significance and meaning to black people (i.e., the blues voicings of Wynton Kelly, the right and left hand voicings of Errol Garner, the octave and chordal voicings of Wes Montgomery, the boogie woogie sound of Avery Parish, Sugar Chile Robinson, Meade Lux Lewis, the unmistakable voicings that signal the introduction to countless gospel compositions, the tinkly right hand voicings of Amad Jamal, the unmistakable left hand of Bud Powell or Horace Silver, etc.). The coded signals are there and communication, of a consequence, is accomplished.

Of the forms which perenially enjoy currency in black music, two are of particular significance because of their durability and time tested communicative powers. These forms are the antiphonal song form (call and response) and the ubiquitous blues.

The call and response form, issuing directly out of African traditions, had a long and glorious history in the area of black oral communication. From the lowly work song of a Georgia fieldhand to the grand choral outpourings of Hall Johnson, from the fire and brimstone sermons of a backwoods preacher to the eloquent rhetoric of Adam Clayton Powell, from the militant preachments of Malcolm X to the Gandhi oriented message of Martin Luther King, from the devil-may-care blarings of a New Orleans brass band to the self-consciously nationalistic and social import laden musical offerings of Archie Shepp, the call and response pattern has served black people well.

A cursory examination of the records of black singers and

instrumentalist will reveal a high incidence of the use of call and response patterns; Ray Charles and the Raelets, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, Aretha Franklin and her sisters, Michael Jackson and the Jackson 5, Cannonball Adderley and the Quintet ("Worksong") Edwin Hawkins Singers ("O Happy Day") Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway et al.

One hundred and fifty years have invested the antiphonal song form with layer upon layer of communally understood meanings.

The second of the alluded to forms is the blues. The blues is the popular music of the black sub-culture. The blues is to the Black man what conventional popular music is to the White man. It is an expression of the separateness of blacks.

A particularly moving, though romantic, definition of the blues taken from the Story of the Blues, by Paul Oliver follows:

"Seen from any point of view, the blues is both a state of

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(Oliver -1969:6)

In examining the musical characteristics of the blues one usually finds a twelve measure structure arranged in the following manner:

I_7	IV_7	I_7	V_7	IV_7	I_7
4	2	2	////	////	2

Because of the exceptionally personal nature of the blues and the extraordinary flexibility inherent therein, the measure structure might include seven, ten, eleven, thirteen, seventeen or any other amount of measures. (Form, structure, internal arrangment is always subservient to content in the blues and most other African derived musics.) The chord sequence might also vary greatly without causing the blues to lose its identity.

The blues is the foundation of much gospel music, most rhythm and blues compositions, much rock and roll, all boogie woogie, as well as other universally popular song forms.

A cursory examination of all the recorded jazz music would probably reveal an unbelievably high percentage of blues and blues influenced compositions, as well as blues influenced performances. The yield would be higher in certain eras than others. (i.e., during the halycon days of bebop it was rare to find a 78/later L.P., without a blues on it. The Soul/Jazz period would probably yield something like 70%. The recordings of the bands of the 1930's in the Southwest would probably yield 75% or 85% blues content.

It seems likely that it is not an accident that almost without exception the players who have influenced the flow of jazz have been great blues players and/or composers well rooted in blues. (i.e., Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton, Count Basie, Earl Hines, Lester Young, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, Charles Mingus, Ornette Coleman, Archie Shepp, et al).

These men and others, often as not, choose/chose the blues as vehicles for improvisation for a plethora of reasons, some of which follow:

1. The ubiquity of the blues (via radio, T.V., Church, juke-box, nightclub, etc.) provides a form with which virtually all Black people

are at least superficially conversant.

2. Extreme flexibility of the form with its exceedingly simple harmonic structure. (three chords)

3. Extreme latitude for musical expression issuing out of this simplicity. Perhaps the very lack of ultra-sophisticated, western art music harmonic encumbrances and artificially imposed complexities make it possible for the performer and the listener to share in a participative musical experience.

Ernest Borneman observes:

While the whole European tradition strives for regularity of

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(Jones - Page 31)

The line from Africa to Contemporary Black American, vis-a-vis the phenomena described in the preceding quote is unbroken. This focus on individuality which manifests itself in music through the use of inflection, expressive devices, such as hollers, shouts, grunts, moans, slide, bends, twists, etc., is endemic to the blues and is also observable in virtually every other aspect of black life. In language, new words are coined and old words are invested with new meanings in an effort to maximize personal expressiveness; new gestures find their way into the existing matrix of kinesics carrying coded meanings (i.e., soul-slap, black handshake, clenched fist, new dances that emerge and are constantly re-interpreted, added to, subtracted from, personalized, discarded, etc., ad infinitum!)

Whether explicitly communicating a message through lyrics about culturally shared experiences or implicitly on an instrument through note choices, inflections, characteristic rhythms, or any of those components which comprise the body of recognizable blues signals, one of the reasons that the blues carries such a powerful message is that on the one hand they represent the distillation of the collective black experience and on the other hand the embodiment of those things which characterize and isolate the black life style.

"The most expressive Negro music of any given period will be an exact reflection of what the Negro himself is. It will be a portrait of the Negro in America at that particular time. Who he thinks he is, what he thinks America or the world to be, given the circumstances, prejudices and delights of that particular America." Le Roi Jones, The Blues People

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The following course outlines are for courses designed to address black music in its many and varied forms. Because of the scope of the field, ideally all four of the suggested courses should be offered. If for whatever reasons, offering all four courses should prove impractical, the essential material is covered in the survey course.

The four courses are:

I. Black Music in the Americas (survey course)

II. History of Jazz

III. Contemporary Soul and Jazz Music

IV. History of Black Music (Non-Jazz)

The general objectives of the series of courses are as follows:

1. To acquaint the student with the entire spectrum of black music.

2. To identify and place in perspective black musicians (composers, performers, etc.) and their activities.

3. Trace the historical development and evolution of black music from its beginnings in Africa to the present.

4. Establish, insofar as possible, the parameters of black music.

5. Identify and evaluate the contributions of black music and black musicians to world music.

6. Examine black music in the context of contemporaneous phenomena (political, social, economic, artistic, etc.)

7. Provide a general awareness of the uniqueness of black culture.

COURSE OUTLINES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

I. Black Music in the Americas (a survey)

objectives 1. To provide a broad overview of black music and black musicians.

2. To provide an introduction to the remaining courses.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Defining black music.
2. African music.
3. Black music in the historical past (African elements and influences).
4. Music in the ante-bellum period.
5. Black music 1850-1900.
6. The jazz era 1900 - 1920.
7. Ragtime.
8. Non-jazz 1900 - 1930.
9. Jazz circa W. W. I.
10. Jazz and boogie woogie 1930-1945.
11. Non-jazz 1930 - 1945.
12. Blues and jazz singers.
13. Black music in Latin America.
14. Bebop, cool school, hot jazz 1945 - 1960.
15. Non-jazz 1945 - 1960.
16. Black nationalism in music.
17. Black music 1960 - 1970.
    Jazz
    Non-jazz
    Movies, T. V.
    Education
18. Future of black music.

II. History of Jazz

Objectives

1. Acquaint the student with the important music, performers, composers, development, etc., in the evolution of jazz.

2. Provide a historical perspective through the isolation of style periods.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Records
2. Defining black music
3. The Contribution of black music and musicians to world music.
4. African music
5. Black music in historical past
6. Popular black music (Brass bands)
7. Jazz era
   - King Oliver
   - Buddy Bolden
   - Creole Jazz Band, etc.
   - Louis Armstrong
   - Jelly Roll Morton
8. Jazz W. W. I
   - Virtuoso performers
   - Dixieland
   - Beiderbecke
   - Instrumentalist
9. Boogie Woogie
10. The big bands - New York
11. Southwest, Duke Ellington
12. Blues
    - Urban
    - Rural
13. Blues Singers
    - Bessie Smith
    - Billie Holiday
    - Dinah Washington, etc.
14. Jazz W. W. II (Swing Era)
15. Bebop
16. Cool Jazz
17. Contemporary Jazz - Mainstream
18. Soul Jazz
19. Ethnic Jazz
20. Avant Garde
21. Third Stream
22. Liturgical

III. Contemporary Jazz and Soul Music

objectives 1. Identify and place in perspective seminal figures, representative works, major styles and style periods, etc.

2. Show how this music reflects and is reflective of black life styles.

COURSE OUTLINES

Jazz

A. Mainstream
   1. Swing
   2. Dixieland
   3. The big bands
   4. Post-bebop

B. Soul Jazz

C. Influences on jazz from other ethnic music.
   1. Spanish
   2. Eastern
   3. Indian
   4. Caribbean
   5. Gypsy
   6. Others

D. Liturgical Music
   1. Reasons for origin.
   2. Cultural, moral and religious implications.

E. Experimental jazz (Third stream and symphonic jazz)
   1. Forms
   2. Media
   3. New Instruments
   4. New uses of old instruments

F. Avant Garde
   1. Cerebral
      a. Extensive ordering of music.
      b. Restrictive forms; extreme scale techniques.
   2. Intuitive
      a. Return to the organic.
      b. Re-introduction of simplicity (primitivism)
      c. Major-minor triadic harmonic
      d. Emphasis on melody and harmony
   3. Unique relationships of this music to the black culture.
   4. Nationalism and jazz.
   5. Avant garde jazz in relationship to the "Academy".
      a. Birth of theoretical systems.
      b. Teaching methods.

II. Soul Music (rhythm and blues)
   A. General definition
   B. Origin and debt to gospel music.
   C. Relationships to the black community.
   D. Influences on American music.
   E. Rhythm and blues since the twenties.
   F. Representative figures.
      1. Performers
      2. Writers
      3. "A & R" men
      4. Recording co-owners (including Motown, Atlantic) and their influence.
   G. Influences on the current popular scene.
   H. Economics
      1. Black music exploited by whites.
      2. Economic advantages to the imitators.
      3. Constant revitalization by the innovators.

IV. Black Music (non-jazz)

Objectives

1. Identify black composers and performers (past and present) active in Euro-American art music.

2. Examine styles and the political-social-philosophical attitudes of black composers involved with art music vis-a-vis the relationship of the elements to the music.

3. Examine in depth contemporary trends/activity in the realm of black art music.

COURSE OUTLINE

I. Introduction
   1. The black aesthetic.
   2. Impositions and errors of stereotypes in black music.

II. The Black Composer
   1. Biographical identification.
   2. Media and styles.
   3. Cultural, economic and social influences.
   4. Philosophy and attitudes.
   5. Representative works.

III. The relationship of black music to general American music.
   1. Definitions of black music.
   2. Unique qualities of black music.
   3. Innovations by black musicians.
   4. The relationship of black music to the black community.
   5. The future of black music.

IV. The Black performer in Euro-American music
   1. Singers
   2. Pianists
   3. Instrumentalists
   4. Conductors

V. Goals, programs and other activities of black musical societies
   1. AACM
   2. BAG
   3. Society of Black Composers
   4. National Association of Negro Musicians
   5. Composers Guild
   6. AAMOA

VI. Religious Music
   1. Composers (biographical and bibliographic data)
   2. The Black Composer as, essentially, a creator of jazz or religious music.
   3. Representative scores and performances.
   4. Performers and performance practices.
   5. Liturgical jazz (definitions, figures and compositions).

VII. Incidental Music (Film, Television, Broadway, Theater)
   1. Composers
   2. Media
   3. Particular problems
   4. Relationships of jazz to non-jazz
   5. Representative works

VIII. The Black Music Critic
   1. Musical commentary
   2. Social commentary

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